

much of that they got rid of before they do it. We don't have a shortage of money. We have a shortage of courage. We have a shortage of character. We have a shortage of intensity to solve the real problems that are facing this country. And until we tackle this, we should not say one thing to anybody in this country about increased taxes. It is morally reprehensible, it violates our oath, and most of all, it does great damage to our country.

I ask unanimous consent that the examples that I referred to be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

Homeland Security Funds for Fish Fries and Spaghetti Dinners

Indiana homeland security officials warned one county in 2006 to stop using electronic emergency message boards to advertise fish fries, spaghetti dinners and other events. Homeland Security, which bought the 11 signs for \$300,000, said the county could risk losing Federal money. The Newport Chemical Depot, which is considered a potential terrorist target, is located in the same county in western Indiana. In the case of an evacuation, the signs could flash routes for drivers to take. The message boards also could be used during floods or other natural disasters. Using them for ads violates federal rules and could dull the public's attentiveness to the boards, said the executive director of the Indiana Department of Homeland Security.

Department of Homeland Security Grants

There isn't a training program out there that DHS doesn't like to fund. Overlap and duplication abounds within FEMA's office of Grants and Training and the multiple grant programs it manages that fund counter-terrorism training for State and local first responders. One of these programs, the Demonstration, Training, Grant Program, has received \$63.6 million from 2004 to 2007 and has awarded 29 grants ranging from \$750,000 to \$6.5 million. However, despite this considerable investment by the American taxpayers, as of 2007, none of the training programs developed using Demonstration Training Grant funding have been deployed for use. In addition, some of the programs appear to duplicate other training programs provided both within DHS and with counter-terrorism training programs provided through other Federal agencies. Even the Administration saw that continuing to fund this program was a waste of money. The President did not request funding for the Demonstration Training Program in fiscal years 2007 and 2008 yet Congress chose to continue funding the program, giving it \$30 million in 2007 and \$28 million in 2008.

DHS—Customs and Border Protection Request a Shopping Trip

The Department of Homeland Security recently requested that a training conference be located within walking distance of a major shopping center. According to a solicitation notice from the Department of Homeland Security Customs and Border Protection (CBP), the federal agency "desires a hotel located within walking distance of (or short courtesy van trip) a major shopping mall which includes multiple significant department stores and/or the Tanger Outlet mall (near exit 213), for the convenience of the participants/guests" of an upcoming training conference. The notice also states that "Contractor shall provide/or assist with local transportation to/from local eateries

and shopping, within the surrounding areas of Contractor's establishment, to include major mall and/or Tanger Outlet Mall."

Interoperable Communications Grant Programs

There are currently two identical grant programs in the federal government that fund interoperable communications, with one housed at the Federal Emergency Management Agency within DHS, and the other at the Department of Commerce. The Interoperable, Communications Grant Program operated by FEMA was created in 2007 and authorized to spend 3.3 billion, while the Public Safety Interoperable Communications Grant Program at Commerce was created in 2005 and authorized to distribute \$1 billion. Both programs are identical in every possible way except for their authorized funding levels and the Departments in which they are located. To further highlight the duplication, it should be noted that the Department of Commerce contracted with FEMA to administer its program, meaning both identical programs are being administered by the same agency. Various public safety organizations commented that having two identical programs simply created confusion and wasted resources. A Coburn amendment was filed last year to combine both programs by eliminating the Commerce program and adding its funding to the FEMA program, but the amendment was voted down by the full Senate.

KATRINA

Katrina Waste

FEMA's Individuals and Households Program (IHP), provides direct assistance (temporary housing units) and financial assistance (grant funding for temporary housing and other disaster-related needs) to eligible individuals affected by disasters. A September 2006 Government Accountability Report found that management of the IHP program in response to Hurricanes Katrina and Rita resulted in as much as \$1.4 billion in improper and potentially fraudulent payments due to invalid registration data. In addition, duplicate payments were made and FEMA lacked accountability for the debit cards (each with a \$2,000 spending amount) that were given to disaster victims. Examples of abuse included the purchase of a \$200 bottle of Dom Perignon champagne at a San Antonio Hooters restaurant, payment for divorces, a sex changes operation, luxury handbags, a Caribbean vacation, professional football tickets, and adult entertainment. And because of FEMA's notoriously bad financial controls and reporting after Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, these are likely only a fraction of the total cost of mismanaging this program.

MISCELLANEOUS

Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission

The Commission was authorized in FY 2002 to create education programs, public forums and arts projects to provide an opportunity to re-examine what it means to be American in the 21st century finding unity in our diversity. "The Bicentennial commemoration of his [Lincoln's] life and legacy will be a bright beacon to completing our nation's unfinished work." The Bicentennial celebration will culminate in a Washington DC "Bicentennial Birthday Gala" with a "world class concert and entertainment special" in DC with "nineteenth century popular and patriotic music" being performed by "outstanding military bands." The Birthday Gala will be followed by a Lincoln Memorial Rededication with a "memorable public program." Additionally, a Joint Meeting of Congress will take place in the U.S. Capitol's Statuary Hall. After a keynote address by a political leader or "senior Lincoln historian", guests will proceed to lunch at the li-

brary. So far, all the planning and arranging of these and other national activities has cost the American taxpayer \$2.95 million.

Inspector General Investigation of an Employment Training Grant

The inspector general for the Department of Labor issued a scathing report in February 28 highlighting more than \$11 million in improper expenditures by the Consortium for Worker Education (CWE). The grant for CWE was issued to provide employment services to participants and employers impacted by the events of September 11, 2001. According to the inspector general, "CWE reported it registered 24,195 enrolled participants, but only documented 20,513 registered participants of which 366 were ineligible and 115 were missing support documentation." Labor department investigators also found that "Federal requirements were not followed when charging costs to the grant" and that four out of five of the program's reported outcome measures could not even be audited. The inspector general also noted that it may be forced to recover \$13 million from the grant if CWE does not adequately justify its expenditures and accounting methods.

NOAA's Totally Bogus Taxpayer Funded Birthday Bash

In June 2007, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) announced that it planned to spend scarce taxpayer resources on a "200 year anniversary celebration." The announcement was especially odd given that NOAA was only 37 years old at the time. According to the department's website, "[T]hroughout the year, NOAA will be hosting an array of events around the country to celebrate the agency's 200-year history." Events listed included a Washington, D.C. gala, a reception for members of Congress, a festival and concert at Hawaii's Waikiki beach park, outreach at the Iowa State Fair, and other activities. Oddly enough, the department's website also stated that "during 2000, NOAA celebrated its 30th anniversary as a federal agency[.]" A series of costly celebrations were also held that year in honor of the "anniversary." According to NOAA, the total cost of the bogus 200th birthday bash was nearly \$1.6 million.

Low-Income Legal Aid Wasted on Chauffeurs, Lavish Meals and Foreign Trips

A 2006 investigation of the Legal Services Corporation by the Associated Press found that the agency's executives wasted taxpayer money on chocolate desserts, \$400 chauffeured rides to locations within cab distance from their offices, and luxury office space in "Washington's tony Georgetown district." Although the Legal Services Corporation, which was created to provide legal assistance to low-income Americans, turns away half its applicants for lack of resources, it still found plenty of ways to spend money on lavish items. In one instance, the agency's board members even gave themselves meal allowances that doubled the amounts given to other staff. Other extravagant expenditures found by the Associated Press include a \$59 three-entrée buffet, an \$18 breakfast featuring scrambled eggs with chives, a \$28 deli buffet, and \$14 "Death by Chocolate" desserts. Total cost?

EPA Grant for a Caribbean Shopping Trip

In 2007, the inspector general for the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) found that the agency spent \$356,012 to send Philadelphia high school students on a shopping trip to the U.S. Virgin Islands. According to the trip agendas, the U.S. students were to take a kayak tour, attend a lecture, and visit a camp in the Virgin Islands. The agency spent \$261,590 to pay for students in the Virgin Islands to travel to Philadelphia. The inspector general wrote in its report on the